

"Truth?"

Text: John 8:32, "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

There is a show on Television that is called, "To Tell The Truth." Most of you are probably familiar with it. For those who aren't it is composed of a panel of celebrities, and they interview groups of 3 people, and the object of the interviewing is to determine which one of the three is actually the person who works at an odd trade, or performs some feat out of the ordinary. At the end of a certain period of time the real person being represented by all 3 is asked to step forward. Although the name of the game is "to tell the truth," it is in actuality a game of lying and deception to keep the panel guessing. Now although this is only a game, it is evidence of how Truth has been pushed into the background.

Jesus said in the 8th chapter of John in the 32nd verse, "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." He was speaking to a group of Jews who believed in Him and He was informing them that through the revelation of God in their lives they would have the Truth, and this Truth would set them free from the world.

On the other hand in another portion of the Gospel of John, during the questioning of Jesus at His trial, Pilate asks the question, "What is Truth?" And it is a good question. Truth? What is truth? Who can define it? What is meant by it? Who has it? In the Old Testament there is a story that is recorded in two different books. It is recorded in I Kings chapter 22, and in II Chronicles chapter 18. If you care to follow along we will be using the story as it is found in the book of I Kings. chapter 22. ~~xxxxxx~~ The story begins by telling that for 3 yrs there had been peace between Israel and Syria. During the 3rd year the King of Judah, King Jehosaphat meets with the King of Israel King Ahab, and they plot to fight against Ramoth-Gilead which is part of Syria. King Jeshoshaphat pledges his ^{army} ~~xxx~~, his horses, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and his people to King Ahab to fight in the battle against Ramoth-Gilead.

But first, King Jehoshaphat wants to know if this is in accordance with the will of God. So he tells Ahab to inquire of the Lord, what they should do. So Ahab assembles his 400 prophets and inquires what the Lord has to say about the matter. And they all answered, "Go up, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." But Jehoshaphat is a little sceptical and perhaps feels that these prophets are merely mouthing what King Ahab wants to hear. So he inquires if there is not yet another prophet that could be called upon. And Ahab tells him there is indeed another prophet, but he does not call upon him because he never has anything good in the way of prophecy. He confides to Jehoshaphat that he hates this prophet. Jehoshaphat tells him to fetch this prophet and hear his prophecy as well.

So Ahab sends a messenger to get Micaiah. While they are awaiting the arrival of Micaiah, the kings are seated on thrones wearing their fine robes, and all the prophets are prophesying before them. Zedekiah made a pair of iron horns and he holds them up like a bull and declares, "Thus says the Lord, 'With these you will push the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" And all the prophets prophesied with one accord and said, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and triumph; the Lord will give it into the hand of the king."

Now the messenger who went to fetch Micaiah tells him what all the other prophets have prophesied, and he tells him to speak likewise. But Micaiah informs him, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says to me, that will I speak." So he comes before the king and the king inquires as to whether he should go into battle against the Syrians. And Micaiah tells him, "Go up and triumph; the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." But the king sees through this prophesy and he knows that Micaiah is merely imitating the other prophets. So he tells him to speak the truth and to tell what the Lord really wants him to tell.

So Micaiah tells him of the vision he saw of the death of the leader, (shepherd or king), and how the people are defeated and return home defeated.

Ahab turns to Jehoshaphat and says, "Did I not tell you that he would
t prophesy good concerning me?" And Micaiah then tells him that all of
the prophets have merely been telling the king what he wants to hear, and
how they have been speaking lies through the instigation of ~~the~~ Satan and
his helpers. These are strong words to be speaking against this vast
army of prophets. Because of this Zedekiah ^{becomes angry and strikes} ~~is angered and he strikes~~ Micaiah
~~on~~ the cheek and inquires as to how he would interpret this action? And
Micaiah informs him that he shall indeed know someday when he was by himself
and had time to think.

Ahab becomes furious with Micaiah's prophesy, and has him put in prison
with scant food, until the King returns from battle. Micaiah's parting
shot to the king is, "If you return in peace, the Lord has not spoken
by me." And he tells all of them, "Hear all you peoples." The remainder of
the chapter tells how Ahab is killed in battle and the prophesy of the Lord
once again was right.

This story is a good example of how truth is so often circumvented and
instead lies are sought after. I cannot help but compare this story with
the events of this past week and of the past 2 years in the Watergate mess.
We have seen for the first time in the history of our nation, a president
toppled from ~~power~~ because his aides and his assistants who surrounded him,
were false prophets in so many ways. But what has really taken place is that
falshood and lies, cheating and stealing, ^{trying to} ~~getting away with things~~ away with
things has become a way of life for some people.

This past week at the Confirmation Camp at Living Waters, I was privileged
to lead the theme for Wednesday on Good and Evil. One part of this session
involved dividing the ~~xx~~ whole group into 4 smaller groups and giving each
group a different hypothetical situation to work on. Each situation involved
thinking through what decision should be rendered, choosing either good or
evil. The one group wrestled with the problem of a boy or girl in a ~~class~~
math class and not doing well in it at all. A good friend offered to sell

As for me, I will call upon God, and He shall hear my voice: He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST August 11, 1974

REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. VELMA COLLINS, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
RANDY DELLEN, GREG BOSKO - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 10:00 A.M.

PRELUDE MUSIC: "PRELUDE IN E FLAT" READ
"ANDANTINO" NOLTE

SILENT PRAYER

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 8 "PRAISE YE THE LORD"

*ASCRPTION - CHORAL AMEN

*EXHORTATION

*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "O LORD GOD OF OUR FATHERS, WHO IN THY GOODNESS HAST LED THIS PEOPLE HITHERTO BY WONDROUS WAYS; WHO MAKEST THE NATIONS TO PRAISE THEE, AND KNIITEST THEM TOGETHER IN THE BONDS OF PEACE; WE BESEECH THEE TO POUR THINE ABUNDANT BLESSING ON THIS NATION OVER WHICH THOU HAST CALLED THY SERVANT OUR PRESIDENT. GRANT THAT ALL, OF WHATEVER RACE OR COLOUR, OR TONGUE, MAY, IN PROSPERITY AND PEACE, BE UNITED IN THE BOND OF BROTHERHOOD, AND IN THE ONE FELLOWSHIP OF THE FAITH, SO THAT WE MAY BE FOUND A PEOPLE ACCEPTABLE UNTO THEE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN."

*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN

*PRAISE

*PASTOR: 'O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.

*PEOPLE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE.

*DOXOLOGY No. 551

SCRIPTURE LESSON: JOHN 8: 31-47

HYMN No. 468 "JESUS, SAVIOUR, PILOT ME"

*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)

*GLORIA PATRI

*CALL TO PRAYER

*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.

*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.

*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.

PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY: "REVERIE" GUYLIAND

DUET: "A SONG OF PEACE" SIBELIUS SONG BY
DALE AND LLOYD LINK

SERMON: "TRUTH?"

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 399 "ONCE TO EVERY MAN AND NATION"

*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

ORGAN POSTLUDE: "RECESSIONAL" SCHUBERT

----- *CONGREGATION STANDING -----

THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY MISS MARIE DAUBENSPECK IN MEMORY OF HER "PARENTS" MARY ELIZABETH DAUBENSPECK AND GEORGE FREECE DAUBENSPECK.

SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: *WALLY FEDER, MONT

MACKINNEY, STEVE VARGO.

MR. & MRS. RALPH KILLEAN WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL AT THE DOOR TODAY.

NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED TODAY BY: MRS. BARB VARGO AND PATTY BASEHORE.

THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 153.

WEDNESDAY - 7:30 - COUNCIL MEETING

THURSDAY - THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE PUBLISHED - HAVE ALL MATERIAL IN BY WEDNESDAY.

FLOWER DATES ARE OPEN - SEPT. 1 AND 15 AND 29TH.

OTHER DATES ARE AVAILABLE.

REV. LINK WILL BE AWAY ON VACATION THE LAST TWO WEEKS OF AUGUST.

REV. GRANVILLE COOPER WILL BE WITH US NEXT WEEK.

REV. CHARLES ADAMI, JR. WILL BE HERE ON THE 25TH.

THE ARC CLASS AND OTHERS FROM THE CONGREGATION ARE CAMPING AT PYMATUNING. THEY WILL BE VISITING GREENVILLE FOR SERVICES AND HAVE A TOUR OF THE BUILDING TODAY.

O GOD, OUR FATHER, GIVE TO THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD A NEW HEART OF COMRADESHIP; THAT EVERY PEOPLE MAY BRING ITS TRIBUTE OF EXCELLENCE TO THE COMMON TREASURY, AND ALL THE WORLD MAY GO FORWARD IN THE NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH HE HATH CONSECRATED FOR US; WHO NOW LIVETH AND REIGNETH, WITH THEE AND THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, ONE GOD, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.